COUNTER Code of Practice- Release 5

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Good morning!

I am Oliver Pesch. I work for EBSCO as a product strategist and have been involved in COUNTER since the beginning. I current serve as chair of the COUNTER board and I was chair of the technical working group that created Release 5.

Today, I am speaking to you with my COUNTER hat on and we will be talking about usage statistics in general with a focus on what is new with COUNTER Release 5.

[Note: if presenting this PPT and using speaker notes, the bullets in the notes typically correspond to mouse-clicks in the animations]

Agenda

- One minute history of COUNTER
- Impact of Release 5 on some common usage scenarios
- Automating harvesting with SUSHI
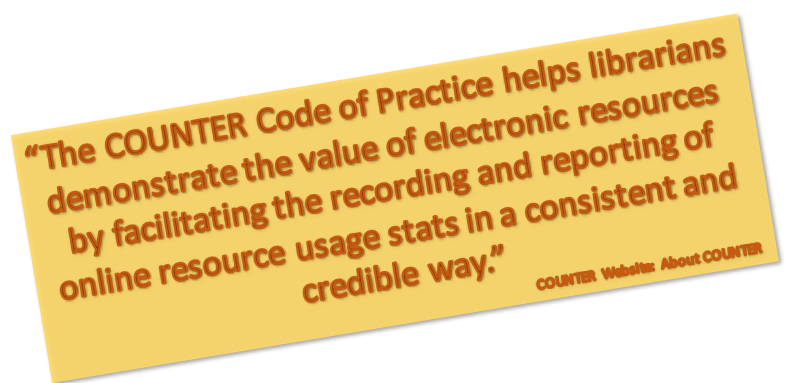- Other features of COUNTER Release 5
- Q&A

COUNTER

Here is a quick look at what we will cover, starting with a very brief history of COUNTER, before talking through a few scenarios where usage statistics are helpful – discussing the what and the why; and, how COUNTER R5 supports these scenarios.

As we go through we will also take a few detours to look at some of the "challenges" with COUNTER Release 4 metrics and how Release 5 addresses those challenges. We will talk about SUSHI (standardized usage harvesting initiative) and, time permitting, we will reveiw some of the other features and attributes of this latest COUNTER code of practice – if we don't get to these today, the slides will be available for later viewing for anyone interested.

History in 1 minute

COUNTER

COUNTER

"The COUNTER Code of Practice helps librarians demonstrate the value of electronic resources by facilitating the recording and reporting of online resource usage stats in a consistent and credible way."

COUNTER Website: About COUNTER

This quote from the COUNTER web site nicely sums up what COUNTER is all about. COUNTER allows librarians to demonstrate the value of online resources in a consistent and credible way with results that are comparable across information providers.
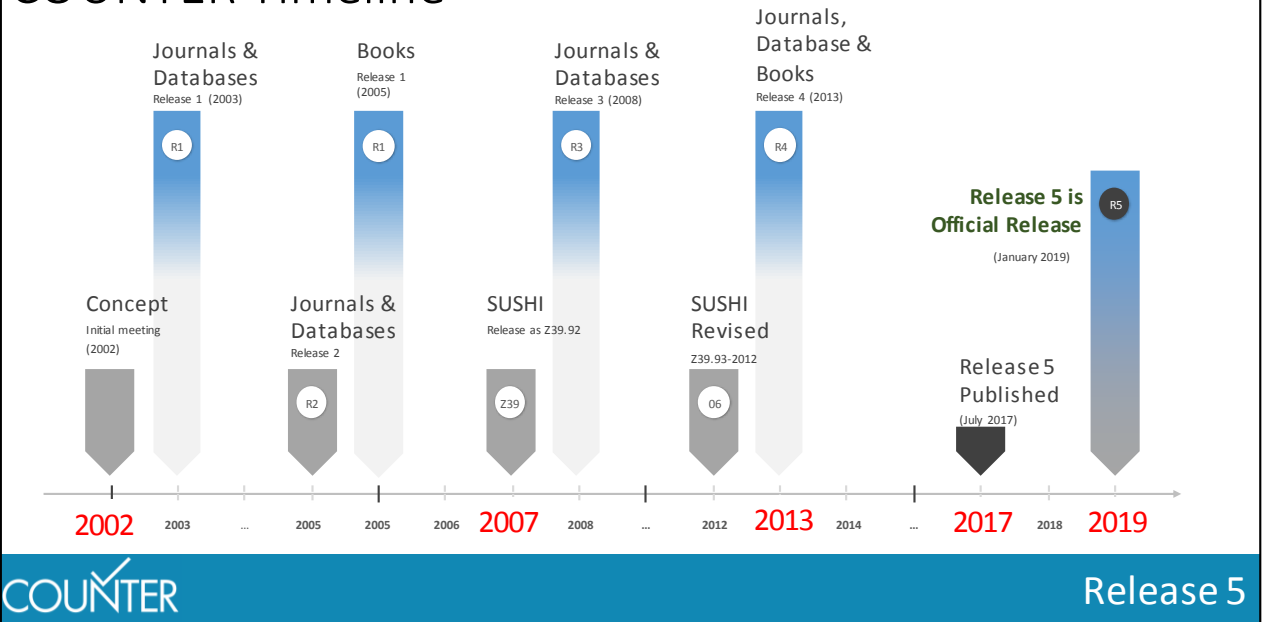
Here is a quick timeline… with key dates highlighted.
- 2002 was the inaugural meeting of COUNTER where the community came together looking for a solution to a growing problem of getting usage data for online information. The first code of practice came out a year later and has gone through several revisions.
- 2007 marked the release of SUSHI as an international standard. SUSHI automates the harvesting of usage data.
- Release 4, the one librarians are most familiar with, became a reality in 2013.
- Summer of 2017 is when Release 5 was published allowing content providers 18 months to implement
- Before it became our reality in January of this year.

COUNTER Timeline
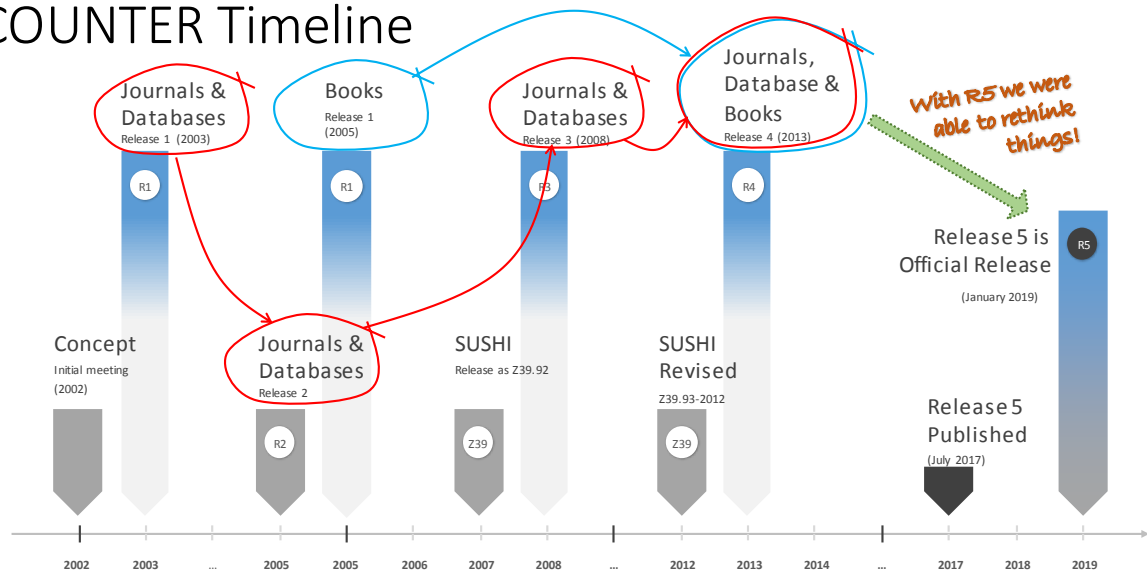
Release 5

A few things to note…
- COUNTER has gone through three releases of the "Journals and Databases" code of practice between 2003 and 2008
- …and, in a separate books code of practice was published 2005.
- It wasn't until release 4 that these two codes of practices were merged… They were merged but not exactly integrated; resulting in some anomalies between book and journal usage reporting.
- With Release 5, we sought to create a truly unified code of practice that handles all content types.

Scenarios

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A&I Database Renewal Decision

EconLit

SocINDEX

PsycINFO®

The objective
Support a decision to renew or cancel a subscription to an abstract & index database

How?
Use metrics that effectively demonstrate overall use

What Metrics?
Searches; Records viewed

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In this first scenario we are looking for metrics that will support a renewal decision for an abstract and index database like EconLit or SocIndex.
- The *how* is, of course, to pull metrics that demonstrate overall use so we can gauge the relative value of the database
- But *what metrics*?
  - The typical ones are **searches** (the more a database is searched the more it can be seen as useful) and **record viewed**.
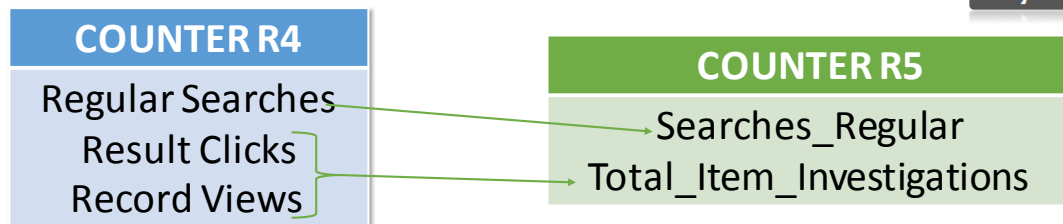
A&I Database Renewal Decision

EconLit
SocINDEX
PsycINFO®

COUNTER R4
Regular Searches
Result Clicks
Record Views

COUNTER R5
Searches_Regular
Total_Item_Investigations

What Metrics?
Searches; Records viewed

COUNTER

Lets look at COUNTER metrics we have for this. On the left we have the COUNTER Release 4 metrics of "regular searches" along with "result clicks" and "record views' (more about those in a minute) and on the right we see that Release 5 offers a similar search metric plus a combined metric called "Total_Item_Investigations" which essentially combines the concepts of results clicks and record views into a single metric and helps address potential over or under counting.
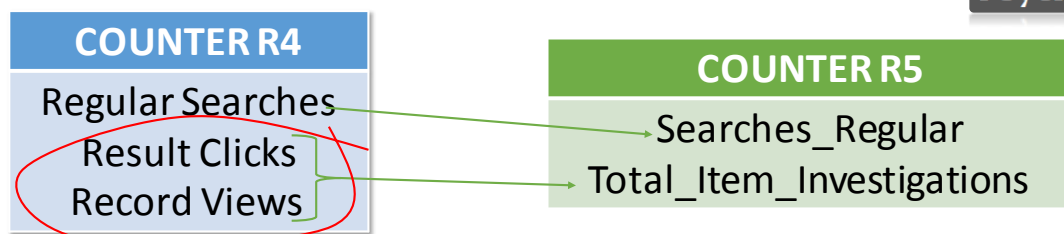
Lets take a short detour and talk about search metrics and why they may not be as reliable or comparable as they once were.

- In this example we have a researcher conducting a search on a discovery service. If you look closely you can see the different databases results are from.
- If we look at the database "facet" we get a clearer picture of the number of databases involved
- We have a single search being performed, but we have dozens of databases each counting that search.

In a situation like this, the fact that a database was searched doesn't really mean much because it is ALWAYS searched. We need a different way to measure if information from the database was used.

A&I Database Renewal Decision

COUNTER R4
Regular Searches
Result Clicks
Record Views

COUNTER R5
Searches_Regular
Total_Item_Investigations

What Metrics?
Searches; Records viewed

Speaking of another way to measure if a database was used, it is time for another detour to talk about the challenges of result clicks and record views. This is something some of you may be very familiar with. When TexShare member libraries changed from or to a federated search, these metrics could change drastically. Let's take a look.

A&I Database Renewal Decision
Result Clicks and Record Views can be problematic

DETOUR

+1 Result Click

+1 Record View

+1 Result Click

Direct Link

+1 Record View

Publisher Full Text
or Link Resolver

Add up result clicks and record views and risk over counting; choose only Result Clicks or Record Views and risk under-counting!

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- Our first user path is a typical one where the user performs the search on the database provider's site and views the detailed record.
  - We get **+1 for result clic**ks (activity that happened on the result list), and **+1 for record views** because we looked a the detailed record.
- Now lets take another common workflow where a search is performed, but instead of viewing the detailed record, the researcher links direct to the full text— or to a link resolver
  - **+ 1 for the result clicks** but **nothing for the record views**.
- And now for the final scenario where the user found the result somewhere else — it could have been a saved link, or a federated search like MetaLib. The user directly accesses the detailed record with out conducting a search or seeing a result list
  - We have **+1 for record views** and **zero for result clicks**

This highlights the potential for under-counting if only one metric is used or over-counting if you add them up.

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Full Text Database Renewal Decision

PsycARTICLES®

Business Premium Collection

Academic Search

The objective
Support a decision to renew or cancel a subscription to a full text database

How?
Use metrics that effectively demonstrate overall use

What Metrics?
Searches; Articles Read; Records viewed

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OK, moving on to our next scenario – the renewal of a aggregated full text databases, such as Academic Search Complete or PsycArticles.
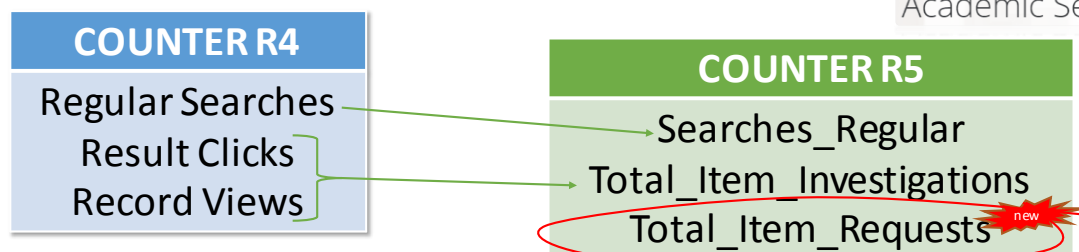
Again, we need metrics to demonstrate value
- What metrics?
    - **Searches** seem an obvious choice**, articles read** would be a great measure, and of course **records viewed** since most full text databases also have some A&I

Full Text Database Renewal Decision

PsycARTICLES®

Business Premium Collection

Academic Search

COUNTER R4

Regular Searches
Result Clicks
Record Views

COUNTER R5

Searches_Regular
Total_Item_Investigations
Total_Item_Requests *new*

What Metrics?

Searches; Articles Read; Records viewed

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COUNTER R4 has the familiar metrics…. And notice that there is no full text metric in COUNTER R4 database reports; however, we have a new measure with R5 – Total_Item_Requests which is measures full text activity.

Since we have been talking about "investigations" and "requests"; lets take a quick detour to explain these new concepts.
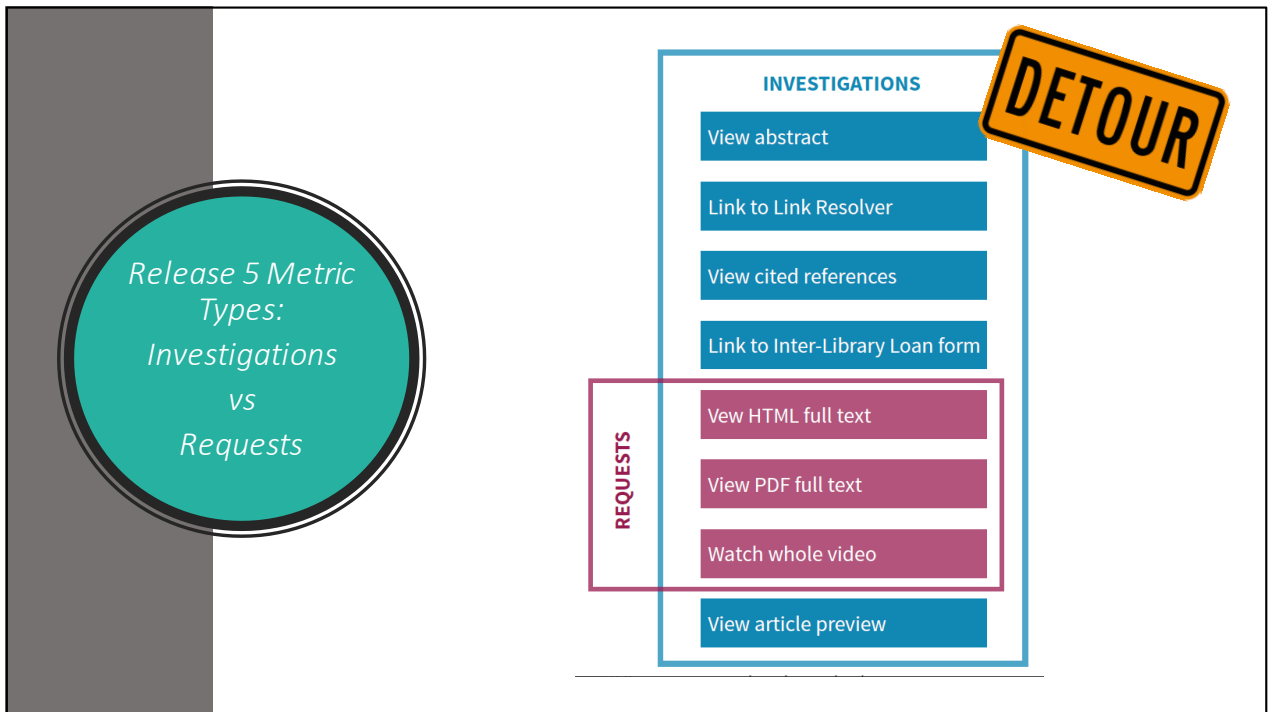
The concept is fairly simple. Any user action related to *viewing* **a content item**, or *viewing metadata* or *accessing other information/services related to that item* is an "**investigation**."

Actually *retrieving the item*, whether it is full text, video, audio, etc. **is a "request"**.

Gone are the format-specific metrics of Release 4 where we measured PDF and HTML separately (but didn't measure certain other formats)…

Simply put… investigations are about "investigating the item" (and that includes accessing the item itself) and "requests" are about actually consuming the item.

Usage Statistics For Funding Bodies

The objective
Demonstrate value of services to government and other funding bodies to support continued or increased funding

How?
Use metrics that show how much the library and its collection are being used

What Metrics?
Searches; Books Read; Articles Read

Release 5

OK, so lets look at another scenario where you are charged with pulling numbers for the annual report that make the library look good.
- What metrics might we use?
    - Searches, books read, articles read.

Usage Statistics For Funding Bodies

COUNTER R4
Regular Searches
Sum Full Text Requests
from JR1, BR1 and BR2

COUNTER R5
Searches_Platform
Total_Item_Requests

What Metrics?
Searches; Books Read; Articles Read

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In Release 4 we can pull searches and full text counts from a variety of reports. With Release 5 searches and total item requests pulled from the platform reports, greatly simplifying the gather of statistics.

Journal Renewal Decision

The objective
Support a decision to renew or cancel a subscription to journal or journal package

How?
Use metrics that effectively demonstrate overall use

What Metrics?
Articles read
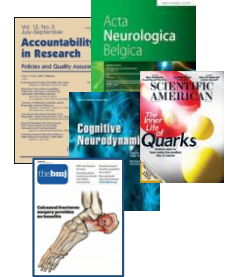
COUNTER   Release 5

Journal renewal decision...
- What metric?
  - Articles read

Journal Renewal Decision

COUNTER R4	COUNTER R5
Full Text Requests	Total_Item_Requests

What Metrics?
Articles read

In Release 4 we the metric we had was full text requests... In release 5 Total_Item_Requests provides the equivalent measure.

eBook Platform Decision

The objective
Support a decision to keep or change eBook platforms

How?
Use metrics that effectively demonstrate overall use.

What Metrics?
Books read; Chapters read

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Now here is a tricky one… measuring the effectiveness of an eBook platform – or comparing two eBook platforms.

- Most likely metrics?
  - Books read… or maybe chapters read… it will depend on the platform.

eBook Platform Decision

COUNTER R4
Full Text (BR1)
or
Full Text (BR2)
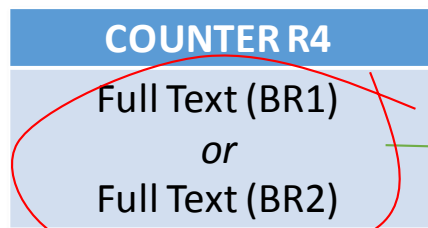
COUNTER R5
Unique_Title_Requests

What Metrics?
Books read; Chapters read

Release 4 had two different reports, and which one was provided depended on how the platform delivered the book content (e.g. as a whole book in a single PDF; or, by individual chapter). In release 5 we now have Unique_Title_Requests which offers a comparable metric, regardless as to how the content is delivered..

eBook Platform Metrics

Two platforms, same metric, different meaning

Platform 1 delivers entire book

Platform 2 delivers by chapter

R4: +1 Full Text Requests (BR1)
R5: +1 Unique_Title_Request

+17 Full Text Requests (BR2)
R5: +1 Unique_Title_Request

R5 introduces Unique_Title_Requests for comparable eBook counts.

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Lets take another quick detour.
- On the left, we have an eBook platform that delivers the entire book as a single PDF
- On the right, we have the same book with its 17 chapters being delivered by chapter
- Assuming the book was retrieved in its entirely, in R4 the platform on the left was have 1 added to the count in Book Report 1; whereas, the platform on the right would increase the count by 17!   With R5 each platform adds 1 to the Unique_Title_Requests metric – a given title can only get credit for one "unique title request" in any given user-session.

eBook Platform Decision

COUNTER R4

Full Text (BR1)
or
Full Text (BR2)

COUNTER R5

Unique_Title_Requests

What Metrics?
Books read; ~~Chapters read~~

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So with Release 5, we have a comparable metric for books read, regardless of how the platform is structured.

Automating with SUSHI

OK, enough scenarios for now. Lets talk a minute about automating the retrieval of

COUNTER_SUSHI for Release 5

RESTful interface returning JSON-formatted reports	Familiar to most web developers

SUSHI also underwent a facelift with Release 5. With release 4, SUSHI was a somewhat heavy-weight XML-based SOAP service (simple object access protocol) which was not all that easy to code for.

With release 5, SUSHI transitioned to a more current REST approach that returns JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) – a more modern approach that most web developers are familiar with.

Lets take a look.

COUNTER_SUSHI for Release 5

https://sushi.ebscohost.com/R5/reports/dr_d1?customer_id=s9011404 &begin_date=2018-01&end_date=2018-12&requestor_id=8936d6de-31db-4672-acf7-ba5561a218ca

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This is what a SUSHI request looks like… You can paste it into a browser and get a result. Let's dissect:
- The base URL is what the provider sets
- Then next bit is the report
- Then we identify the customer
- And the date range

The "Requestor_ID" is a security feature; and/or, an "API_Key" might also be required – all information you can get from your content provider.
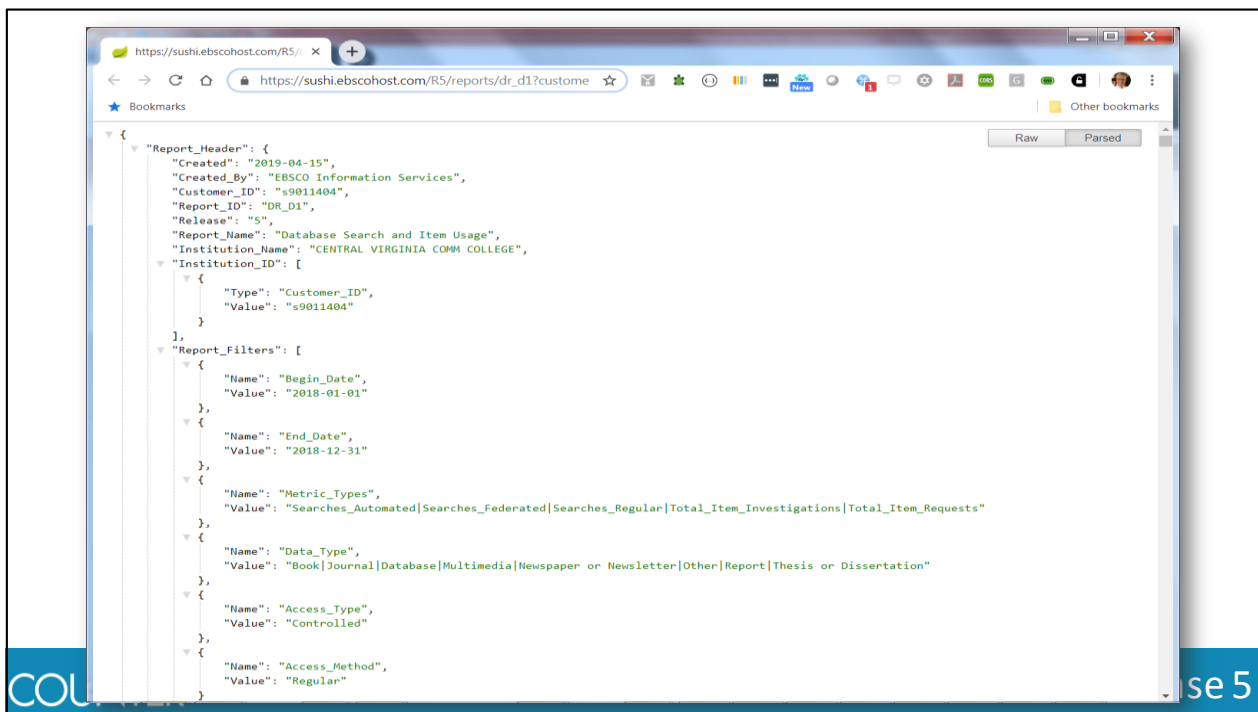
And this is what you get back. It isn't an Excel file, but if you look closely, it is readable and easy enough for a developer to load into a system or even into a spreadsheet.

Q&A

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There is more to COUNTER than can be covered in 30 minutes but hopefully this gives you a flavor of what Release 5 brings us.

Note that if you want a copy of this presentation, just send a note to me or Danielle and we will be happy to send a copy. It will include some bonus material that we didn't have time to cover today – some exciting bed-time reading.

Questions?

More on R5 Features

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Title Master Report
- Book Requests (Excluding OA_Gold)
- Book Access Denied
- Book Usage by Access Type
- Journal Requests (Excluding OA_Gold)
- Journal Access Denied
- Journal Usage by Access Type
- Journal Requests by YOP Requests (Excluding OA_Gold)

Database Master Report
- Database Search and Item Usage
- Database Access Denied

Platform Master Report
- Platform Usage

Item Master Report
- Content Item Requests
- Multimedia Item Requests

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Configurable "Master Reports" along with preset "Standard Views"

Address the Most Common Use Cases

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Release 5 simplified the reporting considerably by defining only for basic reports for Titles, Databases, Platforms and Items as "Master Reports". Master Reports are configurable and provide a lot of flexibility. But for consistency and comparability, R5 defines a set of "Standard Views" which amount to preset/standard filters and attribute selections for the master reports.

Clarity and Consistency in Reports

Report_Name	Journal Usage by Access Type											
Report_ID	TR_J3											
Release	5											
Institution_Name	Sample University											
Institution_ID	isni=1234567890											
Metric_Types	Total_Item_Investigations; Total_Item_Requests; Unique_Item_Investigations; Unique_Item_Requests											
Report_Filters	Data_Type=Journal; Access_Method=Regular											
Report_Attributes												
Exceptions												
Reporting_Period	2017-01-01 to 2017-12-31											
Created	2/5/18											
Created_By	Platform X											

Title	Publisher	Publisher_ID	Platform	DOI	Proprietary_	Print_ISSN	Online_ISSN	URI	Access_Type	Metric_Type	Reporting_Period_Total	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		Controlled	Total_Item_Investigations				
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		Controlled	Total_Item_Requests				
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		Controlled	Unique_Item_Investigations				
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		Controlled	Unique_Item_Requests				
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		OA_Gold	Total_Item_Investigations				
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		OA_Gold	Total_Item_Requests				
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		OA_Gold	Unique_Item_Investigations				
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		OA_Gold	Unique_Item_Requests				
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		Controlled	Total_Item_Investigations;				
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		Controlled	Total_Item_Requests;				
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		Controlled	Unique_Item_Investigations;				
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		Controlled	Unique_Item_Requests;				
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		OA_Gold	Total_Item_Investigations;				
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		OA_Gold	Total_Item_Requests;				
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		OA_Gold	Unique_Item_Investigations;				

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Release 5

If you ever had an opportunity to do much with COUNTER Release 4 reports, you will have noticed inconsistencies is report format and even how metrics appear. The result was a lot more work is required to automate loading of R4 reports because every report is just a bit different. With Release 5 we strove for clarity and consistency

Clarity and Consistency in Reports

Report_Name	Journal Usage by Access Type
Report_ID	TR_J3
Release	5
Institution_Name	Sample University
Institution_ID	isni=1234567890
Metric_Types	Total_Item_Investigations; Total_Item_Requests; Unique_Item_Investigations; Unique_Item_Requests
Report_Filters	Data_Type=Journal; Access_Method=Regular
Report_Attributes	
Exceptions	
Reporting_Period	2017-01-01 to 2017-12-31
Created	2/5/18
Created_By	Platform X

Headers clearly present report elements and are consistent across all reports

Release 5

The header is always structured the same, no matter what report. The labels in column A are always identical.

Clarity and Consistency in Reports

Report_Name	Journal Usage by Access Type									
Report_ID	TR_J3									
Release	5									
Institution_Name	Sample University									
Institution_ID	isni=1234567890									
Metric_Types	Total_Item_Investigations; Total_Item_Requests; Unique_Item_Investigations; Unique_Item_Requests									
Report_Filters	Data_Type=Journal; Access_Method=Regular									
Report_Attributes										
Exceptions										
Reporting_Period	2017-01-01 to 2017-12-31									
Created	2/5/18									

Consistent labeling and details between reports and formats

Title	Publisher	Publisher_ID	Platform	DOI	Proprietary	Print_ISSN	Online_ISSN	URI	Metric_Type
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		Total_Item_Requests
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223		Unique_Item_Requests
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		Total_Item_Requests
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213		Unique_Item_Requests
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223	OA_Gold	Unique_Item_Investigations
Journal A	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlA	1111-22222	1111-1223	OA_Gold	Unique_Item_Requests
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213	Controlled	Total_Item_Investigations;
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213	Controlled	Total_Item_Requests;
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213	Controlled	Unique_Item_Investigations;
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213	Controlled	Unique_Item_Requests;
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213	OA_Gold	Total_Item_Investigations;
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213	OA_Gold	Total_Item_Requests;
Journal B	Publisher X	isni=1234123412	PlatformX	/12.1.0.1/1111.2	pubx:jnlB	1111-22211	1111-1213	OA_Gold	Unique_Item_investigations;

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Release 5

And in the body of the report, the labels in the Excel version are the same as the element names in JSON. Column order is always the same and while different reports have different columns; whenever, the same element is included, it is always called the same thing.

Clarity and Consistency in Reports

Unlike with R4 where numbers just appeared in columns and you needed to know what the report is to understand what was being counted, with R5 the Metric_Type element is always included. And the Excel and JSON versions use the exact same metric type names.

New Attributes Allows More Focused Reports

Access_Type is a new attribute that was introduced to allow usage of Gold Open Access articles to be counted separately from the usage of the licensed/subscribed materials. When evaluating hybrid journals, many librarians prefer to count only the usage of articles that required a subscription – they can now easily do this.

New Attributes Allows More Focused Reports

Data_Type
Defines the nature of the report item usage is being reported on with values of "Book", "Journal", "Database", etc.

Section_Type
Adds clarity to usage reporting for books by defining the content unit accessed. E.g. Chapter, Book, Article, etc.

Access_Method
Allows activity related to text and data mining ("TDM") to be reported separately from "Regular" usage.

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Some other new or clarified concepts.
- Data_Type describes the nature of the item being measured. Book, Journal, Database are just some of the Data_Types you will see
- Section_Type is most useful when dealing with book usage data – the section type describes the unit of content delivered to the user. Book, Chapter, Article, Section are the most typical you will see.
- Access_Method was introduced to allow usage related to text and data mining (TDM) to be measured and reported without over-inflating regular usage. With text and data mining is is possible that every article from every journal is downloaded for mining – and including that activity with regular usage will drastically alter the results.

Helpful Links...

COUNTER

Helpful Links

- Release 5 of the COUNTER Code of Practice
- COUNTER "Foundation Classes" (YouTube Videos)
- COUNTER Friendly Guides
- Appendix B of R5 Code of Practice discusses "Changes from Previous Releases".
- Section 13.3 of the CoP discusses "Transitioning from R4 to R5" and presents the R4 -> R5 equivalents.

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